

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, February 25, 2005

CHIEF RAMSEY UPDATES COUNCIL ON MPDC'S AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS

In testimony before the DC Council's Committee on the Judiciary this past week, Chief Ramsey reported on the public safety accomplishments of the MPDC's automated traffic enforcement programs, as well as the Department's plans to expand efforts to curb aggressive driving. The Chief detailed the history behind the MPDC's two automated enforcement programs—red-light intersection safety and photo radar speeding reduction cameras—noting that DC residents have consistently identified aggressive driving as a top public safety concern. He said that both programs have brought about dramatic reductions in aggressive driving at the locations where the cameras have been deployed. For example, at the 39 intersections with red-light cameras, violations have plummeted 77 percent since the program began in 1999 and 2000. Among photo radar enforcement zones, aggressive speeding has been reduced from almost 1 in 3 motorists in the summer of 2001 to about 1 in 30 motorists today. Ramsey said the drop in aggressive speeding has coincided with a 55 percent decline since 2001 in traffic fatalities in which speeding was the primary contributing factor. "I can report that automated traffic enforcement in the District of Columbia is making our roadways and our neighborhoods safer for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and residents in general," Ramsey told the Committee. The Chief said that in addition to four recently activated stationary photo radar cameras, the MPDC plans to add new mobile photo radar units—including two vans to be deployed in construction work zones—plus 10 new red-light cameras at intersections with a high crash-risk.

Several DC residents and traffic safety advocates—including members of the National Safety Council, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, and the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running—testified at the hearing in support of the program.

① Read the Chief's complete statement at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2005/02/022305.shtm>

① The MPDC has activated four new stationary photo radar speeding reduction cameras. Through March 20, violations detected at these locations will result in warning notices only, with actual tickets issued beginning March 21.

① For details on the new cameras, including their locations, see:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=3075>

① Individuals interested in submitting written comments on automated traffic enforcement to the Judiciary Committee may do so by contacting Sanja Partalo, Legislative Analyst, at (202) 724-8779, or spartalo@dccouncil.us. The hearing record will close on March 9.

FORTY-SIX NEW OFFICERS TO BEGIN NEIGHBORHOOD PATROLS

The MPDC has welcomed its newest sworn members—46 officers who are being assigned to neighborhood patrols throughout the District. The new officers, part of Recruit Classes 2004-3 and 2004-5, spent approximately 24 weeks in training that focuses on academic, physical and tactical skills. All of them will now begin uniformed neighborhood patrols in various Police Service Areas (PSAs)—part of the Department's ongoing efforts to maintain a strong uniformed presence in DC neighborhoods. The new officers were sworn in during a graduation ceremony Friday afternoon by Executive Assistant Chief Michael Fitzgerald, who reminded the graduates that being a police officer involves more than simply enforcing the law (although that will always be a central part of their mission). "We must play a leadership role in creating partnerships with the community and developing long-term prevention strategies," Fitzgerald told the new officers. "We must reach out to our residents, our civic organizations, businesses, and other government agencies, our elected leaders and many, many others—and form a true partnership that is united in our commitment to safer neighborhoods throughout the District of Columbia."

① While the MPDC has reached its goal of 3,800 sworn members, the Department continues to recruit new officers to keep up with attrition. Learn about sworn career opportunities in the MPDC at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/officer.shtm>

SPOTLIGHT ON...THE POLICE OFFICERS STANDARDS AND TRAINING BOARD

The District of Columbia Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) Board was created by the Omnibus Police Reform Amendment Act of 2000. The mission of the POST is to enhance the delivery of law enforcement services in DC by establishing best practiced for police officer selection and training standards. In 2004, the authority of the Board was extended to the DC Housing Authority Police Department. The POST Board consists of 11 members, including the Mayor (or designee), the Chief of the MPDC, other criminal justice agency representatives, community members, an educator and a Fraternal Order of Police representative. A member of the MPDC's Police Reserve Corps is a non-voting advisory member of the Board. With respect to the MPDC, the POST is charged with establishing minimum selection standards for sworn police officers; minimum training standards for the Department's recruit, in-service, and firearms training programs; and standards for the certification of training instructors.

FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE MEMBERS RATIFY NEW COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

Members of the Fraternal Order of Police, MPDC Labor Committee this week voted to approve a collective bargaining agreement with the Police Department that will provide FOP-represented members with a 21 percent increase in base wages over the life of the new contract. The agreement, which must still be approved by the DC Council, provides retroactive pay raises back to October 2003 (4%) and October 2004 (2%), with subsequent pay increases in 2005, 2006 and 2007, totaling 21 percent overall. Technician's Pay and Hazardous Duty Pay will be increased, as will clothing allowances for Plain and Casual Clothes members. The Department's contributions to the dental, optical, pre-paid legal, and employee assistance programs will all increase based on the consumer price index for the Washington Metropolitan Area. The contract is also sensitive to the relative drop in compensation that members experience in the middle years of their careers. Article 35 establishes a mechanism that would address this issue, through the creation of a joint labor-management committee that will review and recommend pay adjustments for officers in the middle years of their careers. In addition, the agreement creates a committee that will establish criteria for recognizing members in the highest performing Police Service Areas. Chief Ramsey said the agreement "places our members and our Department in a highly competitive position for the duration of the term of the agreement, through September 2008." He congratulated the Department and FOP negotiating teams for "reaching an agreement that I believe is beneficial to our Department, our members and their families, and the communities we serve."

NEWS & NOTES

New FOIA Contact for MPDC. Effective March 1, 2005, all Freedom of Information Act requests involving the MPDC should be addressed to MPDC, Office of the General Counsel, 300 Indiana Ave., NW, Room 4125, Washington, DC 20001, ATTN: Vanessa Murray.

Talk with Chief Ramsey this Week. Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues and takes phone calls and emails on two media programs this week: "News Talk," from 4-5 pm, on Wednesday, March 2, on News Channel 8; and "Ask the Chief," from 10-11 am, on Thursday, March 3, on WTOP radio. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/media/media.shtm>.

Sexual Assault Suspect Arrested. A 40-year-old Maryland man is charged with First Degree Sexual Abuse in a December 24 attack inside a basement laundry room in the 1800 block of New Hampshire Avenue, NW. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=3080>.

① For more information about the DC POST, including a list of Board members, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/units/ptsb.shtm>

① Learn more about the work of the MPDC's training academy—the Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute of Police Science—at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/units/ood_ips.shtm

① Visit the Fraternal Order of Police, District of Columbia Lodge #1, at:
<http://www.dc-fop.org>

DATA BOX

Homicides	as of 2/25/05
◆ 2005: 19	
◆ 2004: 28	
◆ % Change: -32.1%	
◆ Closure Rate: 52.6% (10 closures)	
Adult Arrests	week end. 2/19/05
◆ Total: 973	
◆ Drugs: 174	
◆ Weapons: 39	
◆ Motor Vehicle Theft: 19	
◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 58	
Juvenile Activity	week end. 2/19/05
◆ Arrests: 46	
◆ Curfew Violations: 32	
◆ Truants: 49	
Firearm Recoveries	as of 2/23/05
◆ February: 311	
◆ 2005 Total: 509	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 2/25/05
◆ 2005: 4	
◆ 2004: 7	
◆ % Change: -28.6%	

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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